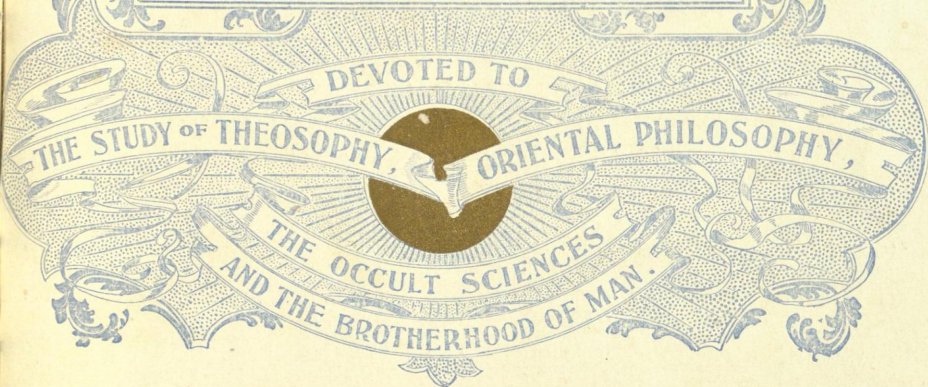


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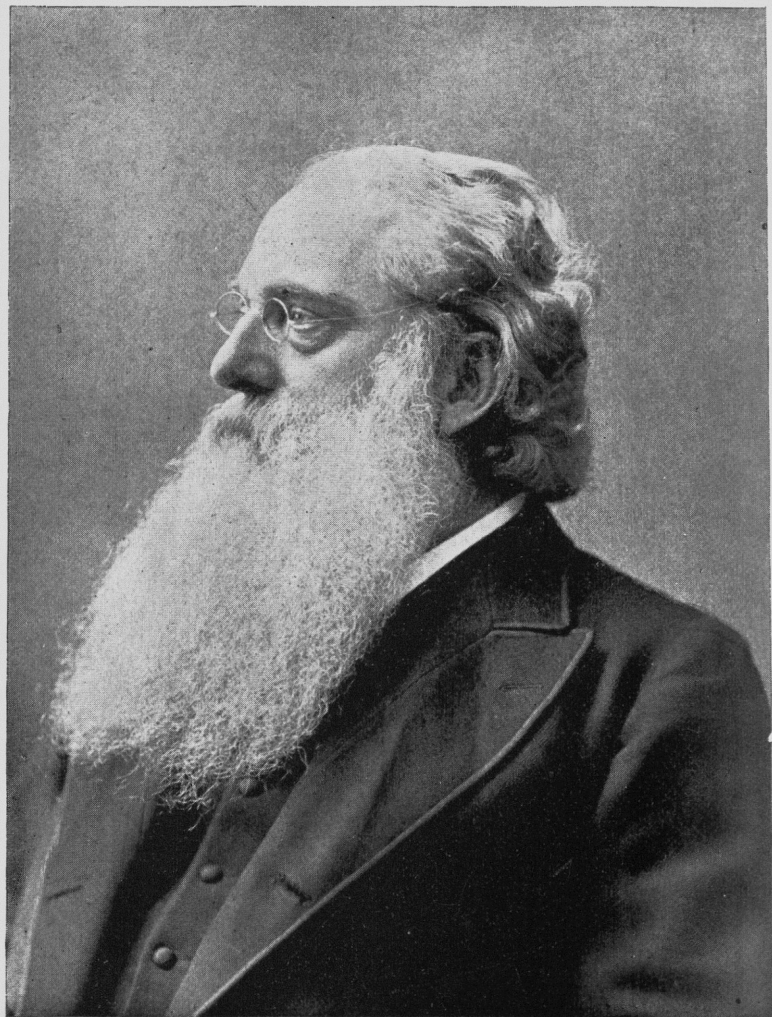
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H. S. OLCOTT.

"Point out the 'Way'—however dimly, and lost among the host—as does the evening star to those who tread their path in darkness."



MERCURY.

OFFICIAL ORGAN OF THE AMERICAN SECTION, T. S.

VOL. V.

JUNE, 1899.

NO. 10

LESSONS FROM WHITE LOTUS DAY.

(Read before the Aloha Branch, T. S., May 8, 1899.)

AT this, our annual meeting, on "White Lotus Day," for the object of expressing kind thoughts of remembrance and gratitude to H. P. B.—the teacher to whom Theosophical students owe the facilities they now have for studying with steady purpose and for obtaining true and hitherto occult knowledge—it may be appropriate to see if some useful teaching, some practical hints for ourselves, cannot be gathered from and through the symbolism of this reverent thanksgiving ceremony.

The very first thing we are reminded of by this anniversary is that the constant watchword of our teacher was *work*—work in its double aspect, physical and mental. She told us to work physically in order to give material help to those around us—thereby doing our share towards the realization of that most important of the three objects of the Theosophical Society, *i. e.* the formation of a nucleus of Universal Brotherhood. Mental work she also urged upon us, for the acquirement of intellectual and spiritual knowledge, the necessity for which is accentuated by the fact that, according to the teaching, all the sufferings of humanity are the result of *Avidya*—ignorance. But the search after knowledge, in order to become a true jewel and not a useless stone, must be unselfish; in other words, we must learn, not from mere curiosity or for our own personal advantage,

but for the purpose of enabling ourselves to help, enlighten and teach all those we can reach. Moreover, if we want to discover what kind of knowledge is most useful and needed, we have only to bear in mind what she said about the motto: "Man, know thyself," the great rule of the ancient schools of wisdom, because knowledge of man includes all. If we wish to follow in the lines traced by H. P. B., we must be constantly striving after this knowledge of self, by constantly studying that mysterious being, Man, to whose constitution Theosophy gives the real key, presenting to our gaze an extended view of his past and glorious visions of his future possibilities. Part of this study is included in the third object of our society, "to investigate the unexplained laws of nature and the powers latent in man;" but I fear that practically, in its lower aspects it has been somewhat neglected, if not, as by some, deliberately but erroneously put aside as useless. In effect, the more completely we are able to understand ourselves, on the lower as well as on the higher planes, the more possible it will be to understand and therefore help others. What is the use of knowing all about rounds and races, suns and planets, of being able to discourse on the "unknowable" Absolute and the various Logoi, if, by our ignorance of our own mysterious selves, we retard our own evolution and jeopardize our future welfare? As the Bible expresses it, "What shall it profit a man if he shall gain the whole world and lose his own soul?" It is undoubtedly a fact that this study of self is a fearfully complicated and difficult task, fearful and difficult in proportion to the complication of our own nature, as proclaimed by the psalmist: "I will praise Thee, for I am fearfully and wonderfully made, and marvellous are thy works; and that my soul knoweth right well." Certainly the information brought by Theosophy makes this awful complication all the more apparent, while it shows that the psalmist knew a great deal more of his own being than most people in this "enlightened" age know of themselves.

But, to render the study of self more easy and profitable, a certain method will be found useful and necessary; and we can gather a guiding clew to that method through the very symbol of the day we now celebrate—White Lotus Day. When I had the privilege of addressing this Lodge last year, on a similar occasion (See *MERCURY*, June, 1898), I remember saying that although a very old and comprehensive symbol, the white lotus represents, more especially for the Theosophists, our own mysterious life:

“The mud, in which it has its roots and out of which it springs, represents our material life in the physical body; the water it traverses, by means of the long, slender, extensile stalks sent out to reach the surface, represents the astral plane, through which we are constantly passing in sleep, and in which we have to tarry a while after death; and the air, in which that lotus-life brings forth its blossoms and thereby the promise of renewed existence, corresponds to the mental or devachanic plane, where blossom out and are assimilated by the Ego the results of our own earthly experiences and battles with the lower elements, previous to the period of reincarnation; and even this is represented, in the lotus, by that curious seed, which germinates and grows in its own involucre—that is to say, even *before* its true physical birth, as we do before reincarnating—after which it falls through the water to the mud, as we fall through the astral into the next babe’s body.”

Thus, from this symbol, we can gather clearly the leading idea that our physical manifestation is only one phase of our existence, and that man’s complete life is spent on three different planes. Therefore, if we want to fully carry out the study of man, we must follow him on those three planes, and get as familiar with the two higher as with the lowest. Science recognizes and studies only the last, and even in that, with which science presumes to be somewhat familiar, the acquaintance is, so far, confined to its material aspects alone. But this is only the “mud” of life, the soil, dry or wet, in which rest only the roots of the lotus’ physical existence. Of the other two planes traversed by the human lotus—the “water” or astral, and the “atmosphere” where it blooms, or devachanic—science knows nothing, in fact, but what has recently been painfully gathered by the Society for Psychic Research and by some few “Borderlander” Scientists; and even that little is still derided by the old-school materialistic scientist.

Ordinary religion barely hints at one aspect only of those two planes, under the vague appellations of “purgatory” or “hell,” and “heaven,” about which we are requested to blindly believe some very fanciful and unreasonable assertions, which may well be called silly when not positively hideous and revolting, as are those concerning the occupations of those poor wretches condemned, according to an infamous dogma, to that unthinkable condition of “eternal damnation.”

The Spiritualists, alone, have made a specialty of cultivating the practical study of the astral, and, while they agree with us that heaven and hell are not far-off regions, but are right around us and as we make them, they also claim to obtain certain knowledge of that plane, under various names, through what they term "spirit communications." But these communications are absolutely unreliable and always contradictory, because emanating, in reality, only from departed human entities, who are themselves still limited and blinded by astral matter, and self-confessedly know very little more in their present abode than they did when in their earthly vestures. For this reason, the spiritualistic crop of astral knowledge is, so far, of very small use and hardly better than the religious one. Moreover, confined as they are to the "water", the Spiritualists hardly ever get a glimpse of the "air"—the real mental plane—because entities from that lofty region very rarely take the trouble to communicate with the ordinary medium and with questioners moved by idle curiosity. Nevertheless, the illusions and delights of the highest astral subdivisions seem quite "heavenly" enough for our spiritualistic friends. The Theosophist, however, aims at higher and fuller knowledge; and he can obtain it if he chooses.

Our studies should therefore embrace the three planes, and the field is quite wide enough to satisfy the most ambitious.

First.—In their efforts for self-knowledge, Theosophists must not ignore the "mud" of physical life by disdaining or discarding the study of the physical body. The tendency, so obvious in the early days of the present revival of Theosophic teaching, to refuse to pay proper attention to the physical plane, on the ground that it was nothing but "Maya"—or worthless illusion—though correct from a metaphysical standpoint, was, I think, a decided mistake practically. Of course, this transitory life *is* an illusion, from the very fact of its limited duration. "Nothing is real but the Eternal," as a wise saying expresses it. But, as long as we are confined to our physical vesture and obliged to make it the basis of our future existences, it must be and it is important for us to know as much as possible of that earthly plane as well as of the twin earthly bodies—the physical and the etheric double—which, for the present, contain us. It is necessary to know the laws that govern both, in order that we may arrive at a better understanding and regulation of the earthly life. On this line of study, Theosophy sheds unexpected light, allowing

us to reach information far in advance of any known to contemporary science, or purported by spiritualistic assertions. What can be more interesting, for instance, than the comprehension and realization of our responsibilities toward that immense army—those three hundred and thirty millions of separate lives—the cells of our body, which serve each of us with miraculous precision as we come in contact with the physical world, and which, like trained soldiers, are divided into those well-organized regiments called the bones, the flesh, and the nervous, muscular and circulatory systems? Human physiology has always been a fascinating study for men of high intellects; but how much more interesting it becomes in the light of Theosophic teaching! How fascinating are the bits of occult physiology we owe to H. P. B.!—those, for instance, contained in Volume III of the “Secret Doctrine”, whereby we are made to realize the mysterious but important laws of correspondences, which link the numerous physical parts of ourselves with the various regions and the diverse lives of the universe, which link us as well to the grain of sand as to the sun and the planets—in the same way as our Egos are linked to the lowest worm and to the Entities of higher planes.

Second.—But the Theosophical student must not stick to the “mud”, any more than he must ignore it altogether. He must try—either intellectually or experimentally—to obtain a clear idea of the “water” or astral—one of the great “Deepes” of tradition—and realize what are the influences that man—living, as well as dead, as we call it here—exercises thereon. By this, I do not mean going (through mistaken training) to the extremes whereby so many of our students have wrecked themselves, in the vain ambition of acquiring “powers”, and of travelling about at will, or at least of “seeing,” in the astral. “Powers”, including that of astral roaming, are worse than useless,—in fact, they may be a curse—when we are not ready for or are unworthy of them, or when we do not know how to safely use them; and even “astral vision” may become a burden, a troublesome nightmare, to the unworthy or weak who forces himself on that plane through mere curiosity or selfish motive. But the earnest, unselfish seeker after truth will find sufficient food for thought and study in the Theosophical descriptions (a) of the seven subdivisions of the astral plane and of their denizens; (b) of the human astral or kamic body and its growth, both during physical life and after “death”, up to the point at which that also is shed by

the Ego; and (c) of the various phases of activity of the Ego himself on that plane, during sleep, in trance, and after death. All this he can do safely by following the teachings. To those interested—as so many are nowadays—in the grave problem of what awaits us after the transition termed death, Theosophy offers, through the instructions of H. P. B. and of her worthy successors, the best, most lucid, most coherent and detailed information our modern races have yet obtained—information infinitely more satisfying than anything obtained through either spiritualistic or religious assertions.*

Third.—Finally, the student must try to raise himself to the study of the “air”—the mental or devachanic region—which is his true domain, and some interesting conceptions of which can be obtained through the teachings of H. P. B. and of our later writers. After studying the plane in itself, he will be able to follow the working of the mental principle in man, tracing its activities in dreams as well as in the ordinary waking life, realizing the existence of what we call thought-currents and thought-transference, and the consequent power of thought and mind, now universally studied by all philosophers since Theosophy began to call attention to it. Through all this he will also reach an understanding, not only of the Biblical aphorism—“As a man thinketh, so is he”—but also of the Theosophical injunction of “guarding our thoughts as much as, if not more than our actions”, on account of their influence on others. This is a vital caution which modern religion, until recently, failed to give us, thus revealing a singular carelessness and deficiency, because the fact of our being responsible for our every thought throws a very different aspect on what constitutes the true religious life.

Subsequently, the student will be able to understand something more of that special mental or devachanic body in which we function after death—St. Paul’s “incorruptible body”—and also to obtain a clear idea of the special period of existence, between two incarnations, which man passes on that higher plane—the Bible’s paradise—for the blossoming and fruition of the results gathered in the lower phases of life, after which he is ready for the renewal of

* See A. Besant’s “Ancient Wisdom,” Chapters II and III, “Death and After”; and Leadbeater’s “Astral Plane,” and “Invisible Helpers.”

material activity and the experiences of reincarnation.* Thus the student will have followed the growth of the sacred Lotus from the mud, through the water, up to the levels of the air, where its glorious flower buds out, expands and blossoms, previous to sending forth the seed of the new life.

Many other minor points of similitude between the life of the symbolical plant and man's evolution could easily be brought out to help us to self-knowledge. But, to those who do not care particularly for this special line of thought, and wish for something outside the study of self, Theosophy, as it was brought back to us by H. P. B., also offers help in acquiring information of and deeper insight into every branch of human knowledge. Here I must repeat what has so often been asserted, that there is not a branch of science that is not embraced, illumined and completed by Theosophy, so that it has justly been termed Divine, Universal Wisdom, a Religious Science and a Scientific Religion. The fact that it is the basis of all religions and of all sciences, is plainly shown by the second object of the Theosophical Society, "the study of comparative religions, philosophies and sciences."

Thus, through the efforts of our venerated teacher, whose demise we commemorate to-night, unlimited possibilities of work, of study and of knowledge are opened to every student: and well may we be proud to see how her teachings are permeating, daily and yearly, more and more, through press and pulpit, the whole current of thought of all peoples. We may now confidently study all human problems, without any chance of error, provided we keep close to our H. P. B.'s teachings. Therefore, while every year of work—as her followers—will bring us fresh acquisitions, wider knowledge and wisdom, it will bring us fresh proofs of her genuine apostolate and mission, producing a clearer conviction of her having been the chosen instrument of enlightenment and progress, and the worthy Messenger of the Masters; and this again will fully justify our reverence and our willingness to ever acknowledge the heavy debt of gratitude we owe to Her and Them.

A. MARQUES.

*See "Ancient Wisdom", Chapters IV and V; and Leadbeater's "Devachanic Plane."

PLANETARY INFLUENCES AND THEIR EFFECTS UPON HUMAN BEINGS.

[Continued from page 332.]

IN the admission of this hypothesis of life as emanating from the sun, we have at once stepped beyond and outside the physical and material aspect of the great luminary. If all life proceeds from him, then each individual life must also depend upon the common origin, and we are launched upon the sea of astrology. The direct influence of the sun, 93,000,000 miles distant, upon the health, and consequently to that extent upon the destiny, of every human being, is established. But the influence of the other planets upon the inhabitants of earth is less easy of comprehension. Yet even here the law of analogy may hold to some extent. If the sun has an acknowledged effect upon all of earth's people, the other planets should also possess some influence, even though in a varying degree. Notwithstanding their smaller size, it is well known that the power of their attraction is sufficient to cause a considerable variation in the eccentricity of the earth's orbit, and if they possess such influence on the physical plane, why should they not have as much, or greater, influence upon the astral or psychic plane? Astrology teaches that such is the case, and assigns to each planet a certain kind and degree of such influence. Thus, the planet which we familiarly know as Mercury, has in all ages, in all nations, and in all languages, stood as the representative of wisdom. In Sanskrit, he was called Buddha, the Lord of Wisdom; in Iranian or Chaldæan, Nebo, Knowledge; in Egyptian, Thoth or Thought. In modern exoteric astrology, he governs the constructive, the inventive, the intuitive faculty, which finds expression in literary and commercial excellence. Originality—or at least such originality as can be said to exist—comes from Mercury, the “messenger of the Gods.”

In Venus is again exemplified the wonderful symbolism of the East. Hindu astrology, from the earliest times, considered this planet as having two aspects—in one being known as Sukra, the bright, the shining, and the other and lower aspect, as Usanus, desire. In these names are allegorized the dual and differing influences Venus exercises upon humanity. In her higher aspect, she

is the "lesser fortune" of exoteric astrology, shedding a mild and benevolent ray upon the soul of man, inclining him to the gentler affections of family and kindred, and the ties of friendship and social intercourse. She lightens up a world otherwise dark, and too often full of sorrow and care. But in her character as Usanus she typifies the lower form of desire, which, carried to excess, leads to so much misery and wrong. This is the true explanation of the influence of Venus. Later astrologers lost the key, and confused her significations. Sukra-Usanus became Lucifer-Venus, and the dual name was thought to refer only to her appearance at various seasons in the year, as evening and morning star. The name Venus was derived directly from Usanus, and Sukra, the shining one, became Lucifer, the bright, the morning star. In the name of Jupiter is found an argument for the Hindu claim to the invention of astrology. The Latin word "Jupiter" is borrowed from Greek mythology, where the father of the Gods is called "Zeus pater", but this is manifestly a copy from the Sanskrit, "Dyaus pitar", father of heaven—an epithet of Indra. The word "Zeus" has no meaning, but "Dyaus", in Sanskrit, has a very definite interpretation. The root "div" means "to shine", hence its application to the sky. Our word "day" is directly evolved from it. In the same way the Aryans, reverencing the sky with all its starry host, came to regard it as "divine", and "dyaus", which originally meant bright and shining, passed into Greek as Zeus, the god of gods. Astrology very appropriately considers Jupiter as governing the religious faculty in man, and he also indicates judgment and reason. He is the great "benefic", and his influence under favorable directions is always for the highest and most permanent good. The sun may bring glory, and Mercury may induce fame, but Jupiter confers more lasting and substantial benefits, by penetrating the inner nature and stimulating the spiritual growth.

In Saturn we have the antithesis of Jupiter. He is the great "in-fortune" and indeed, to his baleful influence may be traced nearly all the misfortune with which humanity is afflicted. The name Saturn can be traced to Sut or Sut-Typhon, the dragon of Egyptian mythology, the evil spirit, the spirit of darkness, from which Christianity educed the conception of the devil, even borrowing the very name, and calling this personage Satan. Yet Saturn did not originate in Egypt. Like almost every other important mythical idea and metaphysical thought, we can trace this one back to India,

where Asita, the evil one, means literally that which is black. To this day, in exoteric astrology, Saturn always represents a dark person. And even such a simple everyday word as soot, in English, the black particles of smoke deposited in chimneys, comes from the same ancient source. So, too, Saturn's day has always been the seventh day of the week, in all nations and all languages. Among the Egyptians, Sut-Typhon was so dreaded, that his day was set apart for special prayer and worship, a custom which was subsequently taken up by the Hebrews, and continued by them to the present time.

The etymology of Mars is equally interesting. Of course, we are familiar with its Greek form, "Ares", which doubtless came from the Egyptian "Artes". Yet neither of these names has any inherent significance. It is only when we again refer to the Sanskrit that light appears. Here the name appears as "Ara", and it means primarily a corner, an angle, hence anything sharp or cutting. This gives us the key to the influence of Mars. He is not peaceful and pleasant, but quarrelsome and sudden. He presides over battles, as the Roman god of war, and in sickness he produces violent and sharp attacks such as fevers and apoplexy. All lingering diseases are due to Saturn. Therefore is Mars termed the "lesser infortune."

The principal objection urged against astrology at the present day, is the fact that it implies a geocentric arrangement of the heavens. We all know how Copernicus revolutionized modern astronomy by introducing, or perhaps revamping, the heliocentric theory, and everyone realizes what a tremendous step forward was thus taken in our knowledge and understanding of the movements of all bodies in our solar system. And it is therefore quite natural to denounce astrology as false because it still adheres to the geocentric arrangement. Yet the comparison is not entirely perfect. We mortals are dwelling upon this earth, and according as the other planets revolve and focus upon us their rays, so are we, according to astrological theory, affected. So, to all intents and purposes, we may truly consider them as circling around the earth as a center, and in that fashion construct our horoscopes. If we were living upon Mars, it would be equally necessary to calculate from a Martial center, and, finally, if upon the sun, then indeed, would our astrology be heliocentric.

But, far over and above the power of forecasting events, and of determining the probable happenings to mortals on the astral plane,

astrology teaches and illustrates the noblest lesson in our earthly existence. It is the solution of the problem of fate. Weary with the burdens of life, suffering the pangs of disease, struggling against the unhappy circumstances of poverty, deserted by friends and relatives, how many thousands of mortals have cried out in agony against the injustice of their lot, blaming some imaginary creator for inflicting upon them such unmerited torture! And, indeed, these inequalities may be said to exist, not only in every degree of civilization, but throughout the whole of animated creation. The innocent child is born among the slums, having ignorant and drunken parents, surrounded by all the evidences and influences of crime, and grows up, amid such surroundings, to an ignorant and criminal career. The gentle and the good often live in obscurity, and pass away early, while the rapacious and brutal thrive lustily, and live to a rich and distinguished and successful old age. Everywhere are to be seen these anomalies in life. What is the cause? The orthodox theologies ascribe it to the whims or mercies of an omnipotent personal God. But the students of a wider evolution, looking for a reasonable explanation of this seeming contradiction of natural law and justice, are forced to the conclusion that each individual is himself responsible for the circumstances of his birth and earth-surroundings. In other words, according as he acts and thinks in one period of existence on earth, so will his career be largely determined in subsequent lives. For the ego is eternal, inhabiting an ephemeral house of flesh. He comes upon earth again and again to fulfill his destiny and gain experience. As is so beautifully paraphrased from the Sanskrit by one of our English poets:

"Many a house of life
 Hath held me, seeking ever him who wrought
 These prisons of the senses, sorrow-fraught.
 Sore was the ceaseless strife,
 But now,
 Thou builder of this tabernacle, thou,
 Now I know thee, Never shalt thou build again
 These walls of pain.
 Broken the house is and the ridge-pole split,
 Delusion fashioned it,
 Safe pass I thence deliverance to obtain."

Yes, it is indeed deliverance that we seek; not, however, from the toils and cares and the bitternesses of this life, any more than from its brief successes and joys. These are necessary sequences of our common heritage. But we look forward to that distant point in our self-evolution when incarnation shall be no longer requisite. It is a

tremendously long journey that the pilgrim ego has undertaken. How many millions of years it has been already engaged upon that pilgrimage the mind can hardly reckon or understand. Science is only beginning to suspect that untold ages have elapsed since the human race first appeared on earth. The slow progress of the cycles has been marked by the birth of continents as well as of nations, and civilization has followed civilization only to be lost in the night of the past, buried under the waves of the ocean, overgrown by mountains, swallowed up by earthquakes, changing and reconstructing constantly with the changing forces of nature. Through all this wonderful panorama moves the human ego, following devious paths in the direction of the great goal. Relatively speaking, each successive life is brief and insignificant. 'Tis but a single day in an ordinary career, or even of less importance. What we call death is but the slumber that overtakes the traveller, who, on the morrow, arises, and with renewed vigor takes up again his line of march. Through new scenes and widely varying conditions, intellectual, material and spiritual, he journeys onward. Perhaps he is a peasant, dwelling far from crowds, and upon the plain or mountain-side tending his flocks, gazing with wondering eyes at the tranquil constellations in the depths of infinite space, and so gathering somewhat of knowledge and consolation, some peace of mind, some hope. Or it may be that he takes the guise of a warrior, moving amid scenes of barbaric splendor at home and of carnage abroad. Fear knows him not, nor compassion. Remorselessly he crushes all who oppose his schemes of personal ambition. Among his race he is called famous, and history recounts his exploits. But the universal law of cause and effect claims the warrior as well as the peasant. In his next career, he, in his turn, may become the worm that is trodden under the heel of tyranny. Hopeless and helpless, scorned by the strong, dragged in the dust of poverty and ignorance, a tool, a mere animal, he lives only as a caricature of humanity, an example of natural retributive justice. And thus he travels on, changing with each life his kind and degree of earth-experience. Sometimes he wears the robes of a prince, sometimes the rags of a pauper. There are no vicissitudes so great that he does not pass through them; no emotions that he does not feel. Karma, the law of retribution, follows him in all his acts, and deals out to him impartial justice. His sins die not with the perishable body. They rise up often when

least expected, and if no punishment is inflicted in one life, it comes inevitably in another. But the law works in response to good as well as to evil acts. His will is free to choose. There are times when circumstances seem more propitious than at others for the exercise of the will. There are also occasions when he seems absolutely unable to lift a finger to avert a wrong or confer a benefit, or even to save his own body from destruction or his soul from crime. At such times he seeks to console himself with the reflection that he is not a free moral agent, and that he is not to blame for weakness of mind and inability to withstand temptation. Poor fool! his will is weak only because he has neglected its cultivation in by-gone days. The law of Karma is inexorable! There is no excuse for inertia! Whenever a crisis comes it should be his part to strive the more, to struggle against what seems the resistless mandate of fate. His victory, if only partial, will bring him great reward. Even if unsuccessful, the mere fact of striving will have immense influence upon his future career.

But what part, you may well ask, does astrology play in this human drama? If you have ever seen a horoscope, calculated by even a common professional astrologer, you cannot fail to have remarked its circular form. It is, in fact, a picture and a symbol of a great wheel, the wheel of the law; and as it gradually revolves from day to day, and from year to year, it marks with infinite nicety of calculation, the events, small and great, that happen in the life of the individual whose life it represents. Did I say the events? It would be more exact to say that the clock of life and time records the subtle influences that are received from the various planets, according to the planetary aspects. The men and women of the present age, living mostly upon the astral plane, following blindly the impulses of the moment, carried away by every sentiment, whether good or evil, swayed by the selfish emotions which have been strengthened in their nature by long experience in the struggle for existence—these men and women are thus unable, as a rule, to resist the planetary influences, and so act according to the indication of the great wheel of the law, and verify its predictions. Karma is inevitable. Retribution or reward arrives sooner or later in response to every act. It may be delayed so long that the individual vainly smiles and imagines that he has escaped. It is related of Labour-laye, the French philosopher, that in his ninetieth year, whenever

asked his age, he was accustomed to raise his head heaven-ward and whisper, "Hush! don't remind them of it!" So, too, these weak mortals may foolishly imagine that the crime of the past has been overlooked. But this great wheel of the law never stops turning. It does not conflict with Karma; it is Karma's time-piece. Whenever certain aspects of the planets appear upon this clock of time and eternity—aspects suitable to bring about influences appropriate to the reward or punishment of the individual, then is the signal for the long-delayed Karma to appear.

Let us not too hastily draw conclusions, from this explanation of the planetary influences, that life is a mere fatality, a procession of events which cannot be controlled or avoided. It must be remembered that the planets, whether malignant or benign, shed upon us only their influences. These may be frequently overcome. In this tremendous process of evolution, nature has endowed our otherwise defenseless souls with a power that is greater than all the elements. It is the power of the will. In Zadkiel's "Grammar of Astrology", in explanation of the word fate, it is said: "The word fate does not here imply inevitable fate; for, though the planets produce a certain influence on the native's affairs, yet that influence is capable of being opposed by the human will, and may by that means be either overcome or greatly mitigated. If, however, it be not attended to, but allowed its full scope, it will then certainly produce its full effect; and the reader must remember that astrologers, in predicting events, always presuppose that this last circumstance will be the case."

Here, then, we have displayed before the eyes of our mind, one of the great occult secrets of the law of evolution. Absolute and eternal justice of the law! Here is no heavenly father forgiving the sins of his children. Every act in life is but the result of a thought. All thoughts are going out in vibratory waves through the solar system, and are being registered in that plane of ether which we know as the astral light. Each thought, under the Karmic law, must bear its appropriate fruit. The question of time when such effects take place, whether sooner or later, whether in a week, a year, a lifetime, or in a succeeding life, is one that no mind can grapple with. All we can do is to go on and humbly endeavor to deserve better Karma in the future. Meanwhile, above us stands the great clock of the universe. It ticks each day and night, each

moment of our lives. The rapidity of its vibrations is beyond our range of perception. We try to grasp the infinite combinations of atomic forms and processes of their development, and the mind recoils from the prospect. Each infinitesimal change on the mental plane of the atoms of humanity, every grand cataclysm in the physical geography of the earth—each, I repeat, seems to happen in accordance with immutable law and mathematical exactness. And so, philosophers like Plato, who founded schools of philosophy based upon numbers, must have had some intuitive knowledge of the basic principles of evolution.

We are now touching upon the inner wisdom of the astral world. Can it be possible, we may well exclaim, that the universe is mathematically ordered, and that the evolution of spirit-matter is carried onward through the eternities, by a process at once infinitesimally and universally exact? Does God geometrize? Did the sages of the past have a glimpse of this knowledge? And is any part of it yet lingering among the dim crannies and recesses of the human mind? That this is the fact may be inferred from a paragraph in Lilly's "Treatise on Astrology", as follows:

"Having closely investigated this subject, I have discovered a very remarkable peculiarity in the angles which form both the old and new aspects. The fact is that every astrological aspect forms the exact angle, or supplemental angle, or regular polygon, which may be inscribed in a circle. * * * There is a very curious and remarkable agreement between the aspects and the angles of regular polygons; and those who understand geometry, and who reflect on the properties of the triangle and other polygons, and on the nature of the circle itself, will find in it room for admiration of the work of the Almighty Creator, whose ways are past finding out.

* * * The student will perceive that these facts are merely offered as proof that the aspects are not arbitrary, but are, indeed, intimately connected with the great principles of geometry, upon which the architecture of the universe itself is founded."

In the above paragraph, the writer, although trammelled with the orthodox belief in a personal God, expressed a great occult reality, which the world of human beings on the astral plane are unable to perceive, except here and there. As the occult apostle of old expressed it: "For now we see through a glass darkly, but then face to face."

In bringing this already too lengthy address to a close, I am re-

minded how little of the astral mystery, after all, can be made plain, or, indeed, how little of any of the occult powers in nature. Astrology is, as has been said, a deep well, and nobody can drink from it with a tin cup. Or, we might say, a world of knowledge still lies concealed within its bosom. Or, to carry the comparison still further, it is like a mighty ocean, which rolls majestically upon the shore, where we, the atoms of humanity, are but as little grains of sand. Yet some day, when we develop the intuitive faculty—in other words, when we rise above the astral plane, and live more perfectly upon the higher plane of mind—the truths, now so occult and difficult to comprehend, will become everyday verities. Meanwhile, it is our duty to employ the will—that simple and superb energy which is a part of every human individual—to train not only the physical body, but more especially the mind, to press on along the path of evolution, to never pause or falter on the way. Each downward glance is fatal; each upward full of hope. The sun, that storage-house of vital force, will shine upon us, and his beams will give us fresh encouragement, fresh enthusiasm, fresh joy. Jupiter will bring us judgment. Venus, no longer in her character of Lucifer, the bright, the morning star, the fallen angel, but in that diviner nature of Usanus, the true-hearted, will unite mankind in bonds of brotherhood and love.

And so, in conclusion, may we read a deeper meaning and a more glowing message in the words of our own American poet:

“Build thee more stately mansions, O my soul,
As the swift seasons roll!
Leave thy low-vaulted past!
Let each new temple, nobler than the last,
Shut thee from heaven with a dome more vast,
Till thou at length art free,
Leaving thy outgrown shell by life’s unresting sea.”

GEORGE E. WRIGHT.

IMPORTANT NOTICE.

Commencing September, 1899, an edition of the *Theosophical Review* will be issued in this country, and will take the place of *MERCURY*. Subscribers to *MERCURY* will receive copies of the *Theosophical Review* until their subscriptions expire. The price of the magazine and other particulars will be announced later.

W. J. WALTERS.

T. S. ECHOES.

THE GENERAL SECRETARY'S REPORT.

BRETHREN OF THE CONVENTION:

In this, the last year of the century, we meet in the Thirteenth Annual Convention of the Theosophical Society in America, or, to use our more familiar title, the American Section, T. S. Every year and every Convention makes more assured our stability and our prospects, and while much the same topics of Sectional interest must recur in a report, the experience of each year seems to emphasize some one truth as its outcome. Before proceeding to this let me recount to you our statistics.

During the twelvemonth from May 1st to May 1st, the following Branches have been chartered:

NAME.	PLACE.	DATE.
Indiana T. S.....	Indianapolis, Ind.....	May 3, 1898
South Haven T. S.....	South Haven, Mich.....	May 26, "
Burr Oak T. S.....	Kalamazoo, Mich.....	June 4, "
Council Bluffs T. S.....	Council Bluffs, Iowa.....	June 16, "
Freeport T. S.....	Freeport, Ill.....	June 17, "
Lansing T. S.....	Lansing, Mich.....	June 18, "
Peoria T. S.....	Peoria, Ill.....	June 25, "
Saginaw T. S.....	Saginaw, Mich.....	July 25, "
St. Louis Lodge T. S.....	St. Louis, Mo.....	July 27, "
Oakland T. S.....	Oakland, Calif.....	Oct. 1, "
Tampa T. S.....	Tampa, Fla.....	Jan. 18, 1899
Narada T. S.....	Tacoma, Wash.....	Jan. 19, "
Leavenworth T. S.....	Leavenworth, Kansas.....	Feb. 16, "

The following 4 Branches have dissolved: First Newark Lodge, Newark, N. J.; Silent Workers' Lodge, Davenport, Iowa; Wachusett T. S., Worcester, Mass.; Burr Oak T. S., Kalamazoo, Mich. Under authority from the Executive Committee, the General Secretary cancelled the charter of the Jamestown Philosophical Club T. S., Jamestown, N. Y., and suppressed the Branch. There are now 66 Branches in the American Section, 2 of which have not paid dues for 1899, and have therefore no representation in Convention. Last year the Branches were 58.

Other statistics are: Members admitted, 411; restored, 39; resigned,

23; died, 17; dropped from the roll, 309. The word "restored" must not be understood as referring merely to persons who seceded from the T. S., and have since asked re-admission; it includes also such as were dropped for non-payment of dues and afterwards regained good standing. The number of Branch members is now 1,104; of members-at-large, 144; total; 1,248. The number last year was 1,035.

In both Branches and members our growth certainly seems small, and during this year, as during last, the loss through droppings from the roll appears painfully large. It is in part through the proper policy of conforming our roll to our living material, but in part to a cause on which I shall touch later on.

The statistics of the propaganda fund are these: Surplus from last year, \$8.80; donations from Branches, \$75.65; donations from individuals, \$425.37; collected by Chicago Committee, \$185.73; appropriations by Executive Committee from General Fund, \$500. The outlays were: Expenses of lecturers and workers, \$881.24; printing and postage for Committee Appeal, \$17.24; freight and incidentals, \$3.40. The surplus on hand is \$293.67, but an appropriation by the Executive Committee, still untouched, of \$250, may be used whenever needed. The details of receipts and outlays are in the same book as the Treasurer's account, and are therefore open to the inspection of the Auditing Committee.

As it was so very desirable that the needs of the Propaganda Fund be pressed upon the attention of every individual member of the Section, I conferred with the National Committee in Chicago as to the best method thereto, and the plan was adopted of sending a circular and pledge-card to each member-at-large, and a supply of each to every Branch Secretary for distribution among his members. All the labor in this and in the subsequent reception of and receipt for pledged subscriptions was generously undertaken by that Committee, and on May 1st, it turned over to the General Secretary the sum of \$180.49 thus raised in the four and a half months it was at work.

In my report to Convention last year, I pointed out that decline in the number of Branches and in Branch membership was inevitable, unless Branches were taught something of Branch life, of the conduct of meetings, of methods of study, and of the evolvment of individual participation; and that meetings could neither be edifying to members, nor alluring to outsiders, unless through proper management and through the intelligent treatment of varied Theosophical topics. Most new Branches are formed of persons just joining the Society, having very slight acquaintance with Theosophy, and

none at all as to the way in which Branches are carried on. Often they have no capable leader, and rarely is zeal so diffused as to lead each member to any systematic reading or thought. The almost certain result is that all are at sea, meetings become desultory talks void of interest or teaching power, the original enthusiasm soon subsides, the Branch languishes, possibly expires. Very little good is done to the Society by the influx of large numbers; it is only as these are interested and strengthened and trained and developed that they become worthy Theosophists and stable Theosophists. And this can be assured only as the process of development is made clear to them, and as they are encouraged to pursue it. In other words, new Branches need an impetus to start them strongly and guidance to direct them rightly, and this must come at first and after intervals.

All this, true as it obviously is, and much as it has been affirmed by experience, has been for a long time in my own mind, and there was peculiar satisfaction in finding so cogent a presentation of it in the "Watch Tower" of the February *Theosophical Review*. Here are three sentences from that article: "The whole conception of Theosophy is not only that it is a life which must be lived, but that it is a science which must be studied. And to study a science requires the assistance of some older student to guide our stumbling footsteps. When, therefore, we read that so many Branches have been founded or that so many hundred members have joined our ranks, we at once ask who is going to help them in their preliminary studies?"

Now it is exactly this help which has been the distinctive feature of our Propaganda work during the most active part of the year just past. There has been the visitation of new points, there has been the formation of new Branches, but the dominant effort has been to teach both new and old, to instruct, train, stimulate, aid, guide Branches and individuals into sure paths and healthful methods. Our workers have visited fewer centers, but have stayed longer at each; they have done less of public lecturing and more of private exposition; they have assisted at Branch meetings, shown what they should be and how conducted, have met individuals and their wants, have, in general, tilled the field which has been already sown. Miss Walsh on the Pacific Coast, Dr. Burnett and Mrs. Scott in the Central States, Mrs. Davis in the East, have all—without agreement or otherwise than spontaneously, so far as I know—adopted this as their distinct policy, and from every place where conditions allowed its execution, there come to the central office evidences of its value and helpfulness and fruit. Members gained new

ideas of what richness there is in Theosophy, problems were answered and difficulties cleared away, systematic teaching supplemented private reading, vigor and resolution took a leap. The letters from the Branches visited are full of gratitude.

I do not mean that no aggressive work has been done, nor that all such was due to the Propaganda Fund. Mr. Titus formed 3 Branches, Dr. Burnett 4, Mr. Storch 1, Mr. Brinsmaid 1, Mrs. Dayton 1. Two of these workers were independent of the Fund, as was Mrs. Maude L. Brainard, that long-time laborer, and the south-west tour of Dr. Burnett and Mrs. Scott was a munificent gift, costing the Section nothing. The entry into fresh fields is an essential part of the scheme. But when we look over the whole activity of the year we see that its prominent, its distinctive characteristic is the internal culture of Branches, and this to an extent never before attempted.

Now this, in my judgment, is to prove our wise policy hereafter. If we can provide means whereby our Branches shall from time to time be given just such visitations, not a hurried call between trains, as it were, but a leisurely stay of length enough to bring into activity all the force each Branch contains and ensure that the activity shall last, we shall be doing more to strengthen the Section than by any other means. And the visitors themselves will be ever more efficient, for their resources grow rich through fresh experience and use. If every F. T. S. responds to the call of the National Committee for a pledge of systematic gifts, this may be done.

The wise action of last Convention in concentrating in Chicago our too scattered machinery seems to have been fully vindicated. The strong local Committees thus made possible, have provided *Outlines of Study* and other helps, have extended a system of correspondence and a system of distributing literature, and can ensure that each new opening for Theosophy shall be utilized.

Probably all of us have noticed the great improvement in MERCURY, not only as to its general contents, wherein this is very marked, but as to the copious reports of Branch activities. It is a strange thing, often commented on before, that so small a fraction of our Sectional membership feels support of the Sectional organ a duty. If every member who can spare one dollar became a subscriber, reading his copy and lending it to friends, there would be no uneasiness as to its income. The same arrangement has been carried out this year as last; the \$100 voted by Convention has been forwarded in installments, and each person joining the Section receives a specimen copy. I recommend the continuance of that appropriation.

We are again indebted, as every year since the secession, to the General Secretary of the European Section for a supply of *The Vahan*, in quantity sufficient for the Branch Secretaries. I rather marvel that more individuals do not themselves take *The Vahan* and preserve it. The matter has been for a long time peculiarly rich, dealing with subjects of exceptional interest, and giving information as to super-physical planes which only advanced students possess, and the price—62 cents a year—is insignificant. Surely a vote of thanks from the Convention to the General Secretary of our sister Section would be most seemly, and I should myself favor some donation from our treasury towards the expense we cause. We are able to give such.

The treasury contains a surplus of \$1,020.58, that of last year being \$1,063.72. The Executive Committee authorized during the year the transfer of \$750 from the General Fund to the Propaganda Fund, but only \$500 was actually transferred. It was, I believe, a wise action, and it made possible some important work when the Propaganda Fund became nearly empty. It was virtually seed sown, and seed, beyond needful demands, is more productive in a field than in a granary.

An interesting, a significant proof of the steady growth of the American Section is in the increasing correspondence of the General Secretary's office. Naturally this is more evident to me than to anyone else. Some delicacy must be felt in referring to it, as reference might seem to imply self-satisfaction; but the satisfaction felt by all of us is really in this increase as meaning that Theosophical interests are advancing. I find that during the year, 1270 letters have gone out from the office. Our postage expenses, apart from stationery, have been \$97.85. This contrasts markedly with the small outlay in the early days of the T. S., and even with the \$46 during the first year after the secession.

Certain experiences of some of our members since we last assembled, makes me think that others may be protected if a well-known law in Occultism is once more emphasized. One of the most positive, universal, exceptionless facts in Occultism is that no secret knowledge, no esoteric training, no "powers" so-called, are ever given for pay. So fixed is this law, so inflexible, that the very fact that any Occult teaching or equipment is offered for sale is *ipso facto* conclusive proof that the teaching or equipment is a fraud. One does not need to examine the credentials or the claims of a seller; his being a seller demonstrates him at once a pretender. When, then, a "course in Occultism", a "series of lessons in Esoteric Wisdom", a "class in

Oriental Psychism'', or what not, is proffered for money, we may be absolutely certain that the "Priest", "Instructor", or however he may style himself, knows nothing of real Occult Science and is what in secular quarters is called a "fake." Now the Theosophical Society is exactly the field where charlatans of this kind seek their prey, and it is possible that in some cases membership has been secured in order that this field may be exploited in the interest of self-emolument. Far more credence is secured if the practitioner can show himself a member of the T. S., avow belief in Masters, and claim messages from Them; and sincerity and devotion are the more easily played upon if the solicitor for fees has good standing in a Branch. I mention the matter thus publicly because certain of our worthy members are now mourning over deception, fraud and financial loss, and the whole system of humbug in spiritual things would come instantly to an end if everyone to whom is offered knowledge for cash would but say to himself, "This offer stamps the offerer."

I have received a letter from Colonel H. S. Olcott, President of the Theosophical Society, desiring me to bring before the Convention the very important matter of providing for the immediate succession of an Acting General Secretary in case of the death or disability of the General Secretary. I most gladly do so. Colonel Olcott's letter assumes the present General Secretary to be the continued choice of the Convention, but such provision should anyhow be made so that in no case can the office work be in abeyance or suffer. I may say that I long ago gave written authority to an active Theosophist in New York to take immediate possession of all my effects there in case of my death, and to pack and transmit to Mr. George E. Wright, at the Chicago Headquarters, all the property of the Section, including books, documents, seal, money, etc., and I prepared a list to guide him. But of course this only provides against loss of effects, and it is most important that the Convention arrange for the immediate assumption of the General Secretary's work and duties. The Resolution which I venture to commend to you embodies what I fully believe to be the wisest provision to secure this end:

Resolved, that in the event of the death or disability of the General Secretary,
be empowered to act as General Secretary until the election of a General Secretary at the next ensuing Convention of this Section.

Colonel Olcott's letter contains a message which it is proper that I should transcribe *verbatim*. It is:

"In bringing this matter before your Convention, I wish you to convey to them the assurances of my deep interest, affection and confidence. They have

acted loyally to their duty in exceptionally trying circumstances, and must reap the joyous results of this Karma in many rebirths. We have to congratulate each other on the cumulative growth of the Society, and the spread of its influence upon contemporary thought throughout the world. Happy we who had the courage to 'stand and wait.'"

The form of Certificate for Delegates which the Convention last year instructed the General Secretary to provide, was duly prepared and sent to the Branch Secretaries about 6 weeks before this Convention.

Doubtless all of us are impressed by the fact that the Theosophical Society is now in the 24th year of its existence, and that in 19 months from now the new century will open, closing behind it that last quarter of every century during which, as we are told, such special efforts are put forth by the Spiritual Helpers of humanity to secure its progress on the upward way. While it certainly is not true that at a fixed date in every hundred years, all spiritual influences from above are suddenly cut off, and humanity left to stagger along as best it may, we can easily believe, even apart from disclosure thereof, that extra forces may at times be added to the normal ones, and if at times, why not at dates? Hence there is nothing improbable in the supposition that such exceptional and additional stimuli are vouchsafed during the last 25 years of every century. Even ordinary observers have noted 3 phenomena which seem to suggest such in this one—the reaction from the scientific materialism before so rampant; a wide-spread interest among men of letters in research into the origin and signification of sacred books, rites and usages; an extensive overturning of creeds and traditions as hindrances to real religion. These phenomena imply an awakening of religious sentiment, and hence some force causing the awakening. A Theosophist of course discerns more. He notes that all fresh scientific discovery and all doctrinal changes point to an approach towards Theosophical truth, and that the awakening force comes from sources back of the Theosophical movement. He even goes so far as to say with H. P. B., that the formation of the Theosophical Society was a distinct step in the program of designed influences, and that this formation occurred exactly in the first of the final 25 years of the century. But is the Society likely to continue? No one need, I think, be unduly optimistic who believes that it is. Though growing slowly it is growing steadily; it is certainly doing no small propaganda work; all such work, besides its reflex enlivening, secures the sympathetic protection of Those who are abundantly able to give both strength and wisdom; and its most serious troubles have ever been so over-passed as to imply like outcome from future ones. Then, too, the

organized enemies of the Society are splitting and disintegrating; our grand scientific and spiritual philosophy is gaining friends among the learned and the devout; "the latest returns from the universe"—to borrow the fine phrase of another—are affirming what the Wisdom Religion has always taught and has lately taught afresh; there are signs that the sober-minded and humane now suspect the real evil which underlies national and personal policies of selfishness. Why should any Theosophist be faint-hearted? He has reason, history and prophesy to brace him. He needs, indeed, to be vigorous, for it is active vigor which secures success; he needs to be intelligent, for the age will not tolerate nonsense, no matter under what names or forms; he needs to be devoted, since consecration is the test of thoroughness. And he needs to be loyal—loyal with that clear recognition of principle, that far-sighted perception of policy, that unswerving adhesion to fact which is real and sound and wise and true and uncompromising and enduring. Given a body of Theosophists vigorous, intelligent, devoted, loyal, and you have a body which shall not only be solid, united, firm, persistent, but which shall carry forward the regeneration of humanity from century to century, till Theosophy shall become the Universal Religion and the Theosophical Society Universal Brotherhood.

ALEXANDER FULLERTON,
General Secretary.

THE TREASURER'S REPORT.

(From May 1, 1898, to May 1, 1899.)

RECEIPTS.

Surplus from last year.....	\$1063.62
Received from Branch dues and fees.....	1461.00
" " Dues and fees at large.....	217.50
" " Charter fees.....	5.00
" " Individual donations.....	4.23
Donation to Adyar Headquarters.....	5.00
Sundries.....	.26
	<hr/> \$2756.61

DISBURSEMENTS.

Remitted to Adyar Headquarters as 25 per cent receipts from annual dues and entrance fees.....	\$419.63
Remitted donation to Adyar Headquarters.....	5.00
Appropriation of Convention to MERCURY.....	100.00
" " Exec. Com. to Propaganda Fund..	500.00
Printing Convention Proceedings.....	105.00
General Secretary's railway expenses to Convention.	65.00
Stenography and Typewriting.....	334.00
Printing.....	81.25
Stationery and stamps.....	111.83
Telegrams.....	4.72
Incidentals.....	9.60
	<hr/> \$1736.03

Surplus on hand..... \$1020.58
ALEXANDER FULLERTON,
Treasurer.

REPORT OF THE THIRTEENTH ANNUAL CONVENTION OF THE AMERICAN SECTION, T. S.

The Convention was called to order by the General Secretary at 10:20 on the morning of Sunday, May 21st. The evening previous, a reception had been tendered the delegates by the Branches of Chicago. Mr. Fullerton gave an address of welcome, and was followed by Mr. J. C. Chatterji, Mrs. K. B. Davis, Mr. W. J. Walters and Miss M. A. Walsh. The music was by Herbst.

Mrs. Wardell, of Topeka, Kansas, was the unanimous choice of the Convention for Temporary Chairman. A Committee on Credentials was appointed, consisting of Mr. G. E. Wright, Dr. Burnett and Mr. Randall. Following the report of this Committee, W. J. Walters, of San Francisco, was chosen Permanent Chairman by acclamation, Mrs. Dennis of Chicago, also nominated, having declined. Miss Pauline G. Kelly was selected to act as Secretary of Convention. The following Committees were appointed:

Auditing Committee.—R. A. Burnett, H. A. Harrell and Mrs. Kate C. Havens.

Committee on Resolutions.—Mrs. E. S. Brougham, Mr. Herbst, Mr. Wright, Mrs. H. C. Dodge, Miss J. C. Brodie and Mrs. H. I. Dennis.

Committee on Nominations.—Miss Kent, Mrs. Davis, Dr. La Pierre, Mr. Prime and Miss Walsh.

The General Secretary read a letter of congratulation from the Hon. Otway Cuffe, General Secretary European Section; and also a letter of greeting from the European Section, and a telegram from W. C. Bailey, of Golden Gate Lodge, San Francisco.

The Convention then heard the report of the General Secretary.

At the afternoon session, Mr. Walters read a paper on "Lotus Circle Work", and at three o'clock, the Chicago Lotus Circle, recently organized, marched in and presented a program of exercises, consisting of songs, recitations, breathing, etc.

At eight P. M., in Steinway Hall, which was packed to the doors, Mr. Fullerton delivered an address on "Moral Evolution", and was followed by Mr. J. C. Chatterji, who spoke on "Theosophic Miracles." Mr. George E. Wright of Chicago presided.

Monday, May 22d. Convention called to order at 10:20 A. M. Report of Committee on Resolutions was presented, embodying the

following: (1) A resolution approving the incorporation of a body of five Trustees, empowered to receive donations and legacies for the benefit of the American Section and support of the Theosophic cause. Mr. Wright and Mr. Burnett of Chicago, Mr. Plumb of Streator, Ills., Mr. Fullerton and Mr. Walters being named as Trustees. (2) A resolution to the effect that a Branch need not disband and return its charter when the membership falls below seven, in the event that the remaining members are able to maintain the Branch and sustain the interest and the work.

The question of the publication of a sectional organ was then taken up. Mrs. Davis, of the standing committee on this matter, presented a report, suggesting the publication of a small paper containing reports of Branches, questions and answers for beginners, etc. Prolonged discussion followed. After the noon recess, the matter was continued, and it was finally voted that the editor of *MERCURY* should publish a small monthly paper, similar to the old *Forum*, including questions and answers, activities of Branches, etc. Twenty dollars per month was voted from the general fund for the purpose of defraying the expense of such publication, and, in addition, the usual annual appropriation for *MERCURY* was doubled.

A resolution was also adopted inviting the Branches in South America to join the American Section.

W. J. Walters was unanimously elected as delegate from America to the European Section Convention, which meets in London, July 8th and 9th.

Reports on Propaganda Work were read from the National Committee and from the Pacific Coast Committee.

On Monday evening, Miss Walsh addressed a large audience upon "The Serpent and the Cross." Mrs. Scott, of Denver, on Tuesday morning, gave a talk on "Class Work", and an illustrative lesson, using the Manuals. In the afternoon, Mr. Chatterji conducted a devotional service, taking his text from the "Bhagavad Gita." At 4:30 P. M., the Convention adjourned *sine die*. Mr. Fullerton, our genial and beloved General Secretary, declares it the most interesting and delightful Theosophic gathering he ever attended, and writes that he "thrills with satisfaction" at each recollection of it.

J. C. B.

The General Secretary reminds the Branch Secretaries that a supply of "Convention Proceedings" is sent them, sufficient to furnish each paying member with his copy, and to provide a copy for the archives. It is the duty of each Branch Secretary to see that every member receives his copy, and the General Secretary earnestly asks that this be attended to, it being so important.

ALEXANDER FULLERTON, *General Secretary*.

WHITE LOTUS DAY AT THE BLAVATSKY LODGE.

MAY 8, 1899.

Never before have so many lovely flowers been offered in grateful recognition of H. P. B.'s great work and the good that it is doing in the world. It was a beautiful sunny morning, and soon after breakfast members began to drop in with their gifts of roses and lilies and all kinds of delicate and rare blooms. After the pleasant bustle of arranging the decorations was over, the simple ceremony began, at 8 o'clock, when the President of H. P. B.'s own lodge entered the crowded hall. With Mrs. Besant came Mr. Leadbeater, Mr. Mead, Mr. Keightley, Mr. Cuffe and other well-known members; but most of H. P. B.'s old friends who were present had already taken their seats. It was a pretty scene. H. P. B.'s photograph was on an easel in the center of the platform, and on her arm chair and all around the flowers were nestled, just leaving room for the chair of the President in one corner. Grave, yet happy faces filled the room, and Mrs. Besant spoke a few words of introduction before Mr. Mead read a passage from Sir Edwin Arnold's "Light of Asia", beginning "In the third watch." This was followed by a reading from "The Song Celestial", "It hath been asked before", read by Mr. Moore; and then Mrs. Besant, who looked well and very happy, spoke. She reviewed the seemingly hopeless task to which Madame Blavatsky gave her life with such success that to-day the stream of thought for which she forced a passage is permeating the thinking world, and has called into being a strong and far-reaching society whose members recognize their privilege and the duty of passing on those fundamental ideas now given out by the wise ones. But most of all, Mrs. Besant laid stress on the writings of H. P. B. As an older student, she *knew* of her own experience that the greater the knowledge gained on occult subjects, the greater would be the appreciation of H. P. B.'s deep knowledge of fundamental facts, and it would more and more be recognized that the careful study of her works—however discouraging from their tangle of outside detail—would, in the end, lead farther than those more easily understood books which have been produced since her death in order to render abstruse subjects easier of comprehension to beginners. Hero worship is not fashionable in these days, but every soul that recognizes greatness in another, only does so by virtue of the germ of future possibilities of greatness which it possesses in itself. We but expose our own smallness when we fix our eyes on the human failings against which a hero struggles, instead of the self-sacrifice and devotion which have raised him to a position in which he can be exposed to criticism. The evening closed with general conversation.

A. J. W.

NATIONAL COMMITTEE LETTER.

To All Branches of the American Section T. S.

DEAR CO-WORKERS AND FELLOW STUDENTS:

At the last meeting of the National Committee, there was such a feast spread for its partaking, that the Committee wishes it could give all of it in the original strong, glowing words.

It had as guests Miss Marie A. Walsh of California, Mrs. Julia H. Scott of Colorado, and Dr. Mary Weeks Burnett of Illinois. Their words of counsel encouragement and suggestion were full of living interest to all who are trying to put into daily practice the basic principles of Theosophy, and especially to those who are trying to develop the devotional element. Suggestions for work with the children may well come first.

How can the amusements and games for them be purged of the selfish, grasping element which is so un-Theosophic? One of the guests has begun to solve the problem. She has worked out a set of rules for the game of croquet, which will train the child in loving service for others. One feature is as follows: There are no partners except as all are united in the common bond of each working for all of the others. If one gets near a wicket and another's ball is near it, that friend's (not opponent's) ball must be helped forward before the player can go through himself. Consideration for others is taught at every turn of the game. Here is a field full of suggestion for those who love to plan for our little folks.

The Lotus Circle movement is receiving a fresh impetus here. A band of children is being trained to give, one afternoon of the Convention, an example of the work, it being hoped that many other Branches will be encouraged thereby to form and sustain this most necessary, and at the same time beautiful, work with the little ones, who, at no very distant day, will be the instruments used by our Leaders and Teachers to give forth true Theosophy. It is found in this work that the essential ideas embodied in reincarnation, Karma, the power of thought, loving service for others, purity, devotion to high ideals, as well as many other Theosophic principles, may be brought out and emphasized with even the youngest. If this work with the children will be undertaken in earnest over all our American Section, think what it will mean to the next generation!

Another fruitful suggestion is that strong, clear articles from scientific or philosophic journals or other literary mediums, corroborative of true Theosophic teaching, be collected by Branches and sent to the National Committee for further distribution.

The guests were unanimous in expressing their opinion, gathered in their experience in Christian communities, that Christianity must be taken as the basis of teaching. If, when a branch is set down in the midst of a strong orthodox section, its members in public meetings can show the agreement and similarities between the teachings of Christ and St. Paul and those of Theosophy, a deep entering wedge will have been made into the solid trunk of that community's public sentiment. How can there be antagonism between true Theosophy and true Christianity, both having been given to humanity by the Masters of Wisdom? In connection with this, it was suggested that Theosophical Bible classes be started wherever practicable, so that Theosophists in general may be made to realize more thoroughly than now the true occultism to be found in that book.

The friends further suggested a much more vigorous and earnest study of the manuals. They all said it was astonishing to find how few members of Branches had systematically studied all of the seven little volumes. Many who listened felt that they would not care to pass even a cursory examination of said books, much less a systematic questioning. It was suggested that Branches conduct a class in the study of the manuals, even if there are more advanced classes for those who have progressed further in their researches; and that these study-classes be conducted in connection with the new "Syllabus for the Study of the Manuals", which may be obtained from the Theosophical Book Concern. It is a complete text-book and should be in the hands of all those who wish to make an exhaustive study of these manuals.

Another point which is of practical interest to all members of Branches is as follows: How many lay-members know much of parliamentary law? Some of the members of one Branch are thinking quite seriously of forming a class under a regular teacher, for the study of this subject, so that, as chairmen or members of committees, delegates, councillors, etc., they may know their duties. They take the ground that the more smoothly the mechanical part of their Branch work runs, the more time and energy they will have to expend on spiritual growth, so they may the sooner become "factors in hastening the evolution of humanity as a whole." The parliamentary classes may be conducted through correspondence, if there is no local teacher.

Another suggestion was "Continual teaching of the Theosophical life." Of what use is the intellectual understanding of any science, without a constant application of its principles to its immediate field of action. A theoretical knowledge of mathematics, of chemistry, of physics or astronomy is of no practical value until the student has become skilled in the applied science. No more is an intellectual understanding of the principles of the Wisdom Religion—Theosophy, or the Science of Being—of any practical benefit to its students until they begin to practice it daily, hourly, in all branches of their work. It is only concentrated, earnest, constant practice that can cause one to become a skilled workman along any line. Of what practical use, then, is mental assent to the tremendous power of thought, for instance, if we continue, nevertheless, to people our currents in space with creations generated by sick, poverty-stricken, morbid, gloomy, unwholesome, or even worse thoughts? If

one is to ascend the ladder, he must continually practice. So these devoted workers most earnestly pleaded for "continual teaching of the Theosophic daily life."

Urgent plea was also made for the greater emphasis of the devotional element in meetings. As one form, it was suggested that congregational singing be more generally introduced into public meetings. The Chicago Branch adopted the suggestion, and put it into their program for White Lotus Day exercises, using that familiar hymn "Nearer My God to Thee." Miss Walsh gave a word or two showing how truly Theosophic the hymn is. As the full volume of sound arose, the feeling was strong that it was helping to lift the audience, as a whole, out of a sense of earth-bound materiality into a subtler, purer atmosphere.

Great stress was laid by these friends on the value of a few moments at the opening and closing of meetings for silence. It was strongly advised that before meditation, at the opening of the meeting, there should be read a verse from the "Voice of the Silence" or from the "Bhagavad Gita"; that the thoughts of those present may more nearly vibrate in accord. The only path which can lead us to the pure, advanced Souls, whose instruments we hope to be, is that of devotion. Without this element constantly emphasized, the progress of the Masters' work here in the American Section must necessarily be greatly retarded.

These suggestions the Committee feels are exceedingly valuable, coming, as they do, from those who are in the field, and so continually coming into touch with Branches, old and new, strong and weak, not only as regards numbers, but also as regards soul development. It is the result of the experience, in many communities, of these indefatigable workers, and the Committee most earnestly hopes the last two points named, "Continual teaching of the Theosophic daily life," and "The greater emphasis of the truly devotional aspect of Theosophy", will be taken and thought over quietly and profoundly by all members of our Section, that the Theosophical Society of America may become an instrument properly attuned and adjusted for the use of its Leaders.

On Wednesday morning, May 24th, there will be a special meeting of the National Committee, called to meet the delegates attending the Convention. Through this, it is hoped, the bond of union between the Committee and the Branches of the Section may become more closely cemented; and that, in consequence of the interchange of thought and suggestion, the National Committee may become a still more efficient servant of the Section.

Again, for this month, let the closing idea be the watchword given by Miss Walsh of California, "A solid T. S. for the Twentieth Century, and a T. S. that understands the true spirit of *Theosophia*."

Faithfully and fraternally yours,

THE NATIONAL COMMITTEE.

REPORTS OF BRANCHES.

ST. JOSEPH, MO. (St. Joseph T. S.).—Anna S. Forgrave, President, writes: During February and March we have had with us, to our great profit and development, Mrs. M. L. Brainard of Chicago. She was untiring in her labors and devoted to the work of pointing the way to inquiring souls. She gave six lectures each week during her stay—one on Sunday afternoons, to which the public was invited; two on afternoons during the week to a class of ladies; and three on week-day evenings for all interested. These were well attended, and much interest was created. Besides she gave frequent private instructions. Many heard for the first time the beautiful truths of Theosophy and were deeply impressed, and we hope much good will follow. Those already studying received a fresh impetus, and feel themselves placed upon solid ground. We regard Mrs. Brainard as a teacher of surpassing ability, her attainments, intellectual and spiritual, giving her, to a marked degree, the power of uplifting, unfolding and enlightening. Her fund of knowledge seems inexhaustible; we cannot fancy anyone more apt in ready response to the queries of the earnest beginner. Genuine praise and expressions of gratitude were freely bestowed upon her. Our membership has been added to and we have the promise of more. Altogether it was a season of marked revival and spiritual progression.

TOLEDO, O. (Toledo Branch).—K. H. M. writes: Our Branch has worked on steadily all winter, meeting every Thursday evening for public meetings and Sunday mornings to study the "Secret Doctrine." Since the holidays, the plan of considering one topic for two successive meetings has been adopted. There would be, first, a thorough review of one of the Manuals, followed, the next week, by a paper on the same subject by some member, who gleaned thoughts from whatsoever reliable source he could, in literature and science, and thus reiterated and confirmed the teachings of Theosophy. The following subjects have been presented by different members: "The Real Man," "The Rationale of Reincarnation," "Karma," "The World of Thought Forms," "Free Will *versus* Fatalism," "The Nature of Evil," "The Devotional Life." The Question Box meetings are held about once a month, and are always profitable and interesting. Two visits—one from Mrs. Kate B. Davis, and one from Mr. J. C. Chatterji—have been of inestimable value to the cause and to individuals. The public lectures of Mr. Chatterji were greeted by full houses, and created a profound impression, investing Theosophy with a dignity that commanded the respectful attention of intelligent listeners. The manner in which he carried his audience in an unbroken chain of thought, from the demonstrated facts of the physical plane to the loftiest spiritual heights, was indeed masterly. Every T. S. center should, if possible, avail

itself of the services of these two splendid helpers. Mrs. Kate F. Kirby, who has been our MERCURY correspondent and who was our Branch Secretary for several years, will sojourn abroad this summer and will be in London during the Convention of the European Section. Another study class, meeting in the afternoon, will begin this week. The new "Ancient Wisdom Syllabus" will be used. MERCURY is donated to the public library each month, in the hope that the T. S. may shed its light still further.

NEW ZEALAND SECTION.—Miss Edger arrived in New Zealand on April 24th, after an absence of about eighteen months, and is now lecturing in Auckland, at Choral Hall, to audiences numbering from two to three hundred. Her subjects so far have been: "Theosophy as a Living Power in the World," "Jesus of Nazareth and the Christ," and "Practical Lessons from the Life and Teachings of Christ." In addition, she has held meetings for inquirers, drawing-room meetings, and meetings for study, in connection with the Auckland Branch, all of which are fairly well attended. The activities at the various Branches continue as usual. A "Secret Doctrine" class is held in each of the four principal Branches, and the "Ancient Wisdom" is also much in use, but there is nothing of special importance to chronicle. Two interesting lectures given in this Section are: "The Eternal Man," by A. J. Maurais, of Dunedin; and the "Vedantic Conception of the Universe," by Mr. J. B. Wither, of Christchurch.

ST. PAUL, MINN. (St. Paul T. S.).—M. F. M., Secretary, writes: MERCURY must not think that the St. Paul Branch has gone out of existence or gone to sleep; such is not the case. Our room, 537 Endicott Building, is open every Thursday during the day for visitors and those wishing to use the library. At seven P. M., there is a class for young people, where Mrs. Besant's Manuals are studied. "Man and His Bodies" and the "Seven Principles" have been gone through, and we are now using "Reincarnation." At eight, the regular weekly meeting begins; this being free to visitors, of which we usually have several. Every other month there is a meeting of the Branches in St. Paul and Minneapolis—somewhat of a social gathering, where music and discourse, interspersed with Theosophy, form the entertainment of the evening. The last meeting was held in St. Paul. In my next report I hope to record the addition of several new members, which means a good deal in St. Paul, where people are so reluctant to be identified with any society holding views which differ from those entertained by the majority.

CHICAGO, ILL. (Shila Branch).—A. W. writes: The Shila Branch, upon its organization, determined on definite study. During the past year it has given out as much truth as possible, and, as a result, real progress has been made. The applications for membership have not been many, but all members are earnest students. Three classes meet at the residence of the President—Mrs. J. A. Darling. The Friday meeting is the Shila Branch proper, and has studied during the past year, the "Secret Doctrine," "Isis Unveiled," "An-

cient Wisdom," "The Growth of the Soul," "Invisible Helpers," "The Path of Discipleship," "Orpheus," and Mrs. Besant's pamphlets on "Individuality," "Emotion, Intellect and Spirituality," "Occultism, Semi-Occultism and Pseudo-Occultism." The Saturday evening class has completed the "Manuals" and "Ancient Wisdom." The "Secret Doctrine" class meets every Sunday morning. It began with the Commentaries of Madame Blavatsky, Nos. I and II, and now has Mrs. Cooper-Oakley's papers. Mrs. M. L. Brainard's questions, which have since been published at Headquarters, have been used during the year. A great source of pleasure and profit is the library, containing many valuable books and pamphlets for reference and lending. Our President has been so faithful and at all times pleased to impart knowledge. Miss Walsh has given us a new impulse onward. To sum up—the past year has been a useful and profitable one for the Shila Branch. The Convention was a very pleasant and harmonious one, and delegates from many Branches were present and welcomed. A gratifying fact was the large representation from the Pacific Coast.

SEATTLE, WASH. (Ananda Lodge, T. S.).—Mrs. L. P. Bush, Secretary, writes: Ananda Lodge T. S. had thirty-seven members; eight dropped out, but their places have been filled by ten new members admitted since September 1st, and these, together with one demit from Spokane, make a total of forty. As many as twelve active workers assist in reading papers or delivering public lectures at the regular Sunday meetings. We feel there has been a strengthening of interest and devotion on the part of these active workers, that promises better, more united effort in the future, which is largely due to the inspiration of Miss Marie Walsh, who visited our city early in December, and, by her innate worth of character and devoted, enthusiastic labors, created an interest and growing belief in the truth and value of Theosophic teachings. The Lotus Circle, organized by Miss Walsh, has continued to prosper, and now numbers eighteen members. The possibilities for beautiful, harmonious relationship open out with increasing promise to all who unite in the magic spell of this work. At the regular Branch meeting held Wednesday evenings, the study of Mrs. Besant's masterpiece, "The Ancient Wisdom," is taken up in connection with the "New Syllabus." The reliable information gained by careful effort gives the students ability to comprehend the broad scope of the Wisdom Religion, as well as the wonderfully minute and perfect details so concisely elucidated in this text-book. Through a more thorough comprehension themselves, the students are enabled to more readily answer questions in a clear, concise way, winning the interest and confidence of inquirers. We feel that through a somewhat more extended correspondence, we have recently drawn nearer to our fellow workers in the Branches of the various cities on the Pacific Coast—Tacoma, Vancouver, Spokane, San Francisco and Los Angeles,

and appreciate the broadening of interest that necessarily comes from thus being brought in touch with others united in furthering the success of the work in which we are privileged to take part. The work of the National Committee in Chicago sends thrilling to us currents of helpful, suggestive life-force. The monthly magazines have a most valuable mission. The issues of MERCURY are securing an interest in Theosophy that is a potent factor in our work, as they reach those who would otherwise, perhaps, remain ignorant of the movement. The *Theosophical Review* is a powerful stimulant of deep spiritual force from the most advanced and unselfishly devoted workers, whose labors represent some of the truest intellectual and ethical thought of to-day.

BROOKLYN, N. Y. (Mercury Branch).—Annie E. Parkhurst, Secretary, writes: Our Branch, though not a large one, is now an active and interesting one, so far as its members and those who visit it are concerned. Our weekly meetings have been devoted to the study and discussion of the "Ancient Wisdom", by our earnest and truth-seeking little group. It is our present intention to continue our meetings through the season.

SAN FRANCISCO, CAL.—Golden Gate Lodge has continued its usual activities, although the attendance has been somewhat smaller than during the winter months. The Lotus Circle meets now at eleven A. M., and a new series of "chalk talks", given by Mrs. Best, is attracting much interest. During the month, a "Theosophic Endeavor Circle" has been organized, which, it is hoped, will be the cause of bringing out some new workers. Lectures have been given as follows: "A Theosophic Concept of Christ", Dr. Brackett; "Sacraments and Revelation", Mrs. Best; "The Journey of Life", Mr. Charles P. Nielson; "The Serpent and the Cross", Miss J. C. Brodie; and "Life, Its Origin, Purpose and End", Mr. Will C. Bailey. The Branch continues its study classes. One of the delegates to the Chicago Convention has returned, and has given a delightfully interesting account of proceedings. We are pleased to have among us Dr. Marques, of Honolulu. He promises to remain for two or three months, and to give some lectures.

NOTICE.

Mr. Leadbeater's new book "Clairvoyance" is now ready.

BOOK REVIEWS.

MAGAZINES.

The Theosophist, Madras (May), continues the second Oriental series of "Old Diary Leaves." Colonel Olcott tells of the happy thought of devising a flag, which could be adopted by all Buddhist nations as the universal symbol of their faith, thus serving the same purpose as the cross does for all Christians. He says that the Buddhist flag is one of the prettiest in the world, the stripes being placed vertically. They are composed of six colors alleged to have been exhibited in the aura of the Buddha, *viz*: sapphire blue, golden yellow, crimson, white, scarlet and a hue composed of all the others blended. The description of the worshipping of Buddha at a temple near Colombo, is very interesting. This chapter of the "Leaves" reveals many facts in the early history of the Theosophical Society, when Colonel Olcott and Mr. Leadbeater lectured together in Ceylon. Several remarkable literary coincidences are cited, which are productive of much thought. "Dharma Prachara, or the Propagation of Religion", is an article by an Indian Sadhu, in which he endeavors to analyze the true import of the primeval Vedic religion. He says that the simple title "religion" is quite a becoming designation for this grand philosophy, which resembles the all-pervading Lord of the Universe, in its all-grasping nature, in its sublimity and in its peacefulness. "The Aura of Metals", by Dr. Marques, is the third paper of a series current in this magazine. The characteristic forms in the atomic auras of metals are shown in a diagram, which will facilitate the student in the chemical analysis and identification of metals. The concluding paper, by S. Stuart, on "Views on Thought and Matter", deals with the law of correspondence to different rates of vibration in the auric sphere. The re-marriage of widows is liberally discussed by S. C. Basu in "Caste System in India." He states that the Hindu caste system as it at present prevails in India, prohibits the re-marriage of widows among the higher castes. The lower castes have always enjoyed greater liberty in this matter, and by immemorial custom the re-marriage of widows is allowable amongst them. A. Govindacharlu discourses on the "Evidences of Supersensuous Consciousness." To attain this state requires wisdom, meditation and purity. H. S. O. gives a few illustrations of "Real and Seeming Doubles." He says the probability is that everyone has a quasi-double. It is an ancient belief that "all men are created in pairs." N. Chandra Bisvas shows us four different aspects of "Bengali Folk-Lore"—*viz*: Dreams, Astrology, Chiromancy and Necromancy. Under Reviews, Mr. Braid and the new edition of his famous work on "Hypnotism", are discussed.

The Theosophical Review, London (May), contains many salient observations from the "Watch Tower." Among the most important is an extensive quotation from "The Soul and Health", from the columns of *The Christian World*, showing the influence of Theosophical ideas in the more liberal literature of the Church. Comments on "Pretrinitarian Christianity" and "The Downfall of Dogma", based on articles published in different English papers, indicate "the collapse of the whole structure of Protestant dogma in any fashion in which it has been previously formulated." Mrs. Cooper-Oakley's paper on "The Heavenly Kingdom of the Holy Grail" unveils much of the mystery of holiness which has ever been the nature of the mystic cup. The writer traces with exactitude the origin of this time-honored tradition, and sets forth the points which are of vital interest to the Theosophic student. "The Trismegistic Literature", by G. R. S. Mead, is food for the erudite thinker. This the fifth of a series of treatises on the Greek writings ascribed to Hermes the Thrice-Greatest. The current article deals principally with the origin of the oldest extant specimens of this literary cycle. A. M. Glass endeavors, in "The End of the Keely Motor," to elucidate, with the aid of diagrams, the mechanical structure and the nature of this wonderful motor. "Discrimination" is a reply by Edith Ward to an article on "The Uses of Discrimination" in the April number of the *Theosophical Review*. The third paper by Mrs. Hooper, on "Scattered Scraps of Ancient Atlantis," considers how the architects of the ancient buildings venerated fire, and celebrated fire rites. "Fire, water and corn are linked in a trinity in all traditions of ancient symbolism and ancient rites." Courage and peace are written between the lines in Mrs. Besant's article "On Some Difficulties of the Inner Life." She says, "We are apt to read too exclusively for knowledge and lose the moulding force that lofty thoughts on great ideals may exercise over our emotions." Daily meditation is urged. "The God Within," by Miss E. M. Green, is a short story of the struggles of an artist to paint her vision of the "God within." Several new books are reviewed at length in the review columns. The most noticeable is "Northern Lights and Other Psychic Stories", which C. W. L. states "is a very good collection of stories."

The Vahan, London (May).—Two questions on the Law of Karma are ably answered. One bears on the subject of "undeserved punishment", the questioner wishing to be informed wherein lies the "comfort" of knowing the law that no suffering comes to us unless deserved. *He* extracts more "comfort" from the thought that he is an innocent victim! A. A. W. replies: "It is quite true that 'to be an innocent victim' is a very enjoyable feeling. To all women, I think, and to a good many men, it is a pleasure beyond all actual enjoyments—so called. All lovers and husbands know well that, above and beyond the delight their women-kind find in self-sacrifice for them, the delicate fine flavor—the crown of it—is that it shall be something quite useless, nay rather vexatious to the beloved one! If F. P. K. will ask himself why he prefers to be an innocent victim rather than a guilty one, he can hardly fail to see that it is because, in the first case, his satisfied vanity overflows the suffering, whilst

in the latter the wound to his self-conceit is the cruellest pain of all. We *don't* say it is a comfort to have deserved suffering—it is not; but we *do* say that as he grows older he will know better. The rough knocking about we most of us get in life is mainly directed to knocking out of us this conceit—this pride of virtue, which suffers for our failures. I know we are used to protest that what hurts us is our sorrow for sin; but this is our nineteenth century cant, the pretension to a height of virtue to which very few indeed of us have attained. When such as you and I have really come to the point of being sorry for our failures purely because the world is the worse for them, without one thought of the suffering they have brought upon ourselves—why, I think the Kali Yuga will be near its end!" To a question whether the "transferability of Karma is the esoteric truth underlying the Christian doctrine of vicarious atonement", it is said: "Of course (on the physical plane) one man may submit himself to a punishment destined for another; that may satisfy human justice, but never the Law. Whatever comes of it is a matter of the sufferer's own Karma and no one's else; it is, and can be, no satisfaction of the original Karmic debt, which still remains to be paid, to the uttermost farthing, by the soul that incurred it. 'Vicarious atonement' is unlikely, unreasonable, unmoral, to the exoteric philosopher; to the Ancient Wisdom it is absolutely impossible to God and man. Nor is there anything in the recorded words of Christ which clashes with this view. He, like every other Adept in similar circumstances, came to 'save the world' by the preaching of the Law. By his divine power he 'forgave sin' by the very fact that he gave strength to 'go and sin no more.' There is no other test, no other manifestation of a Savior's power than this; a God from whom virtue does not flow forth to strengthen and enlighten his disciples to rise above sin in *this* life can make no atonement for sin in any other, though his blood were shed daily on millions of altars all the world over."

Theosophy in Australasia (April), contains as its initial article, an urgent appeal to every member of the Theosophical Society of the Southern hemisphere, to become either readers or subscribers of the magazine. A continued article of merit and length on "Darwinism", is the chief attraction. The General Secretary's Report, and a summary of income and expenditure of the Australasian Section, with several columns devoted to "Questions and Answers", and "Theosophical Activities", complete the number.

Philadelphia, Buenos Aires (April), contains several articles new to the general public. Mrs. Besant opens the list by a dissertation upon "India, Her Past and Future." E. Bernouff writes in regard to the "Universal Theory." Alaster tells of the apparition of "The White Lady" of the royal house of Brandebourg.

We have also to acknowledge the receipt of *The Brahmavadin*, *Teosophischer Wegweiser*, *The Prasnotara*, *The Dawn*, *Awakened India*, *Die Ueber-sinnliche Welt*, *Balder*, etc.

THEOSOPHICAL SOCIETY.

AMERICAN SECTION DIRECTORY.

General Secretary, ALEXANDER FULLERTON,

5 University Place, New York City, N. Y.

In order that Branches may be accurately represented in this Directory, Secretaries are asked to report promptly all changes.

Albany, N. Y. Albany T. S. George H. Mallory, Secretary, 51 State St.

Boston, Mass. Alpha T. S. Mrs. Katherine Weller, Secretary, 76 Lonsdale St., Dorchester.

Butte, Mont. Butte Lodge, T. S. Carl J. Smith, Secretary, 47 West Broadway.

Buffalo, N. Y. Fidelity Lodge, T. S. Mrs. Jennie L. Hooker, Secretary, 1596 Jefferson Street.

Brooklyn, N. Y. Mercury T. S. Mrs. Annie E. Parkhurst, Secretary, 173 Gates Avenue.

Creston, Ia. Creston T. S. Daniel W. Higbee, Secretary, 105 East Montgomery St.

Chicago, Ill. Chicago T. S. Miss Isabel M. Stevens, Secretary, Room 426 26 Van Buren St. Meets Wednesday evenings at 8 o'clock; Sundays at 3 P. M.

Chicago, Ill. Shila T. S. Miss Angelina Wann, Secretary, 6237 Kimbark Ave. Meets every Friday afternoon at 2 o'clock at 5427 Washington Ave.

Chicago, Ill. Englewood White Lodge. Herbert A. Harrell, Secretary, 5912 State Street. Meets every Friday evening at 6558 Stewart Ave.; public lectures at same place every Sunday at 3 P. M.

Chicago, Ill. Eastern Psychology Lodge. Mrs. Kate Van Allen, Secretary, 6237 Kimbark Avenue. Meets every Thursday evening at 6115 Woodlawn Ave.

Cleveland, Ohio. Cleveland T. S. Mrs. Helen B. Olmsted, Secretary, 649 Prospect St. Meets every Monday at 7:30 o'clock at 649 Prospect St.

Clinton, Iowa. Indra T. S. J. H. Moses, Secretary, 232 5th Ave.

Council Bluffs, Iowa. Council Bluffs T. S. Lewis A. Storch, Secretary, Room 58, U. S. National Bank Building, Omaha, Neb.

Denver, Colorado. Isis Branch T. S. Mrs. Alice L. Prentice, Secretary 200 Pearl St.

Detroit, Michigan. Detroit T. S. Mrs. Leota Giddings, Secretary, 640 Fourth Ave.

East Las Vegas, N. M. Annie Besant T. S. Almon F. Benedict, Secretary Box 337.

Ellensburg, Wash. Ellensburg T. S. Patrick H. W. Ross, Secretary, Box 92.

Findlay, Ohio. Findlay T. S. Miss Laura Athey, Secretary.

Freeport, Ill. Freeport T. S. Wm. Brinsmaid, Secretary, 167 Foley St.

Galesburg, Ill. Galesburg T. S. Mrs. Elizabeth K. Anderson, Secretary, 781 E. Main St.

Green Bay, Wis. Green Bay T. S. Rowland T. Burdon, Secretary, 1005 South Jackson St.

Indianapolis, Indiana. Indiana T. S. Miss Helen C. Baldwin, Secretary, 725 South Penna St.

Honolulu, H. I. Aloha T. S. William R. Sims, Secretary. Meets Tuesday evening in the old Masonic Building, corner of Fort and Queen Sts. Library open to the public daily from 3 to 5 P. M.

Jackson, Michigan. Jackson T. S. John R. Rockwell, Secretary, Lock Drawer 552.

Jamestown, N. Y. Jamestown Philosophical Club. Dr. William E. Goucher, Secretary.

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